Among men, reject none; among things, reject nothing. This is called comprehensive intelligence. —*Tao Te King*

THEOSOPHY

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THE LIFE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

THE one great test of a religious movement is its capacity to keep abreast of the times. What, precisely, is a religious movement? Ought the Theosophical Movement to have this description?

The account of the Theosophical Movement that we have from its Founders is that it is an expression of the eternal surge of human aspiration toward knowledge and understanding; that it had the same original inspiration as other historic movements which led to the formation of the great religious bodies which are in the world today; that this inspiration comes from men—human beings—who have completed their own course of evolutionary development but who, out of a deep sympathy for their fellows, refuse to leave the scene of earthly life, and remain as teachers and helpers of mankind. They reject the nirvanic bliss they have earned, choosing to await those cyclic intervals when it is possible to give the affairs of men a turn for the better—not through "interference" in a historical sense, but by bringing to the attention of the race ideas which are the keys to a better understanding of the common human predicament.

In the past, these ideas have taken the form of the great religions of the world. The mission of H. P. Blavatsky was of this character, and yet there is a difference in her work, which is marked by a freedom of mind from the familiar qualities of "religion" as we commonly experience it. Her inspiration has the intensity of religion without its narrowing constraints. Her intellectual vigor is almost martial, her vision uses the poetic form yet has a majesty that breaks the mold of even great poetic expression. One might say that she calls out the full promise and potentiality of human beings in this

restless and ambitious age, yet with a wisdom that neglects no depth of the heart and forsakes no tenderness or delicacy of the inward aspect of ancient religion.

Theosophists are nothing if not lovers and students of H.P.B.

So, there is a sense in which the Theosophical Movement is a religious movement, and a sense in which it is not. It is surely vulnerable, as any student of Theosophical history knows, to the vicissitudes of time as they attack religious movements. How does this work?

The world does not stand still. It moves and grows. Men learn better than their fathers. They are confronted by emergencies and crises former generations could not have understood at all. The cycles hurry to maturity, producing new currents in the thought of men and releasing impulses for change which are rooted in the laws of intellectual and moral evolution.

The difficulty of a religious movement, even one with the best will in the world, is to comprehend these changes with the imperfect understanding at its disposal. The ardent ones who fall heir to the grave responsibility of carrying forward a religious movement after the teachers have left the scene have a double charge: not to lose the essence of what they deem to be the light of the world—to *preserve* the teaching, that is; and to spread it far and wide. They must be conservators and yet they must have daring. This is a heady union of obligations. It is especially difficult to fulfill while the world rushes on to its destiny. Yet it must be attempted, lest the movement become a sect, left behind by the momentum of the larger progress of the world.

Great teachers have always addressed themselves to the peculiar ills of the epoch in which they work. It is thus that they gain attention, thus that they begin to be understood. Thus they gain the leverage that is needed in order to bring about a change *in* the world, in the way men think and feel about their problems.

Students may not feel able to undertake such labors in their fulness; how could they, when they are themselves in some measure the captives of the very ills that have overtaken the race? And yet to neglect the great issues of the time, in the name of faithfulness to a work which began with the promise of succor and balm to the great suffering masses of mankind—surely this is a narrow loyalty and a confinement of the original vision of the movement they represent.

Today the world is wracked by the agonizing threat of war and the souring of what was once called by the name of "peace." The forms of social organization are undergoing sudden and disturbing changes. Vast adjustments at the hands of Karma are in process and more, quite plainly, are on the way. How does Theosophy "as the practical explanation of things, and not the tenets," apply to such events and transformations?

Individual reflection on questions such as this may be necessary to maintain the life of the Theosophical Movement on into the future —not, surely, to find mandates for Theosophical "action," although action by individuals may be called for, but as the means of maintaining in the Movement that deep sympathy and attempt at universal understanding which has animated it from the beginning.

Psychology and "Progress"

The coming together of Theosophists of differing degrees and qualities—yes, of training—is bound to stir up latent personalities, preconceptions and prejudices. The mental and psychic atmosphere engendered by their cooperation must work inwards as well as outwards, and still further must arouse evil forces, for it is a known occult law that every advance made along the path that leads to selflessness arouses the forces that are opposed to that consummation, and this is true individually and collectively. In this immense work which we have undertaken, trials of various kinds have to be encountered, and the ones by whom we are tried are those of our own household. There are lessons in every event, even the smallest. We have to do the best we can and leave the results to the Great Law.

—Robert Crosbie

letters • questions • comment

EDITORS, THEOSOPHY: Your valuable magazine is no doubt a great help to students, but perhaps less so to newcomers to the teachings, in relation to getting a "whole" view of the aims of Theosophic endeavor and fundamentals of Theosophic attitude.

Students are presumably familiar with the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine,* but, in their daily living, do they hold them in mind in just that way? I am thinking that THEOSOPHY might set out boldly certain headings for daily reflection in every issue. This would serve in a way to impress these points on readers, or serve as reminders.

What I have in mind are such headings as these:

"KNOW THYSELF" LAW THE WAY

If the ordinary individual, with the usual human encumbrances (but perhaps more "spiritually" aroused), can keep thinking about these three subjects with *each* day's activities, surely he will be on the road of true knowledge and progress! Under each heading could be printed references to Theosophical books or magazine articles—possibly even entire articles or extracts therefrom. Of course, any article or quotation includes all three subjects, just as life does, but the heading would serve to emphasize one aspect.

If we are ever to get some experience in presenting the philosophical ideas of Theosophy to others, some paragraphs along that line might be helpful.

* * *

Perhaps we could say that every human being is on a voyage of "soul discovery," and that he may begin to chart his course with particular attention to one of the great areas of mystery. To "know thyself" involves progressive peeling away of those aspects of per-

sonality which are less than the spiritual Self. In formulating the First Fundamental Proposition of *The Secret Doctrine,* H. P. Blavatsky continually stresses THAT which is beyond any finite conception of beinghood, and even of deity. "Law," in its universal sense, may be seen to grow from the evolutionary interdependence of many degrees and forms of intelligence. "The Way" constitutes the individual's utilization of the cyclic opportunities for an expression of understanding of other beings and, partially through them, of himself. These great "areas" of philosophic inquiry are the substratum upon which are based the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine,* and therefore headings which represent these areas to the individual student are of great value to focus reflection. An introduction to the pamphlet, *Fundamentals of Theosophy,* a collation from the various writings of H. P. Blavatsky, seems particularly relevant here and should be suggested for student reading or rereading. Here we encounter a different phrasing in respect to the basic "areas" or questions:

> 1. What is the origin of man, and, in the light of that origin, what is his actual relationship to other beings and finally to the whole of life? What is "the Highest," and what may he come to know of It?
>
> 2. What are the laws and processes of interaction between the Whole, or the universe, and the part, man? Is "justice" a cosmic fact?
>
> 3. Is the individual man immortal, as an individual, and if so, what should be his conscious purpose in selecting and weighing life's experiences? What goal may be reached?
>
> The personal consciousness of the individual man, the essential elements of human experience are simply happiness and suffering. Yet when man seeks to *understand* these states, which he alternately passes through, when he strives to find some measure of control over them, he needs perspective and orientation—basic orientation. Here he arrives at the doorway of the great, impersonal, *fundamental* questions, and is driven to find answers complete enough to provide at least a temporary working basis for integration.

There is, of course, no "formula" for the application of Theosophy to daily life, yet if philosophical principles are to bridge the gap between head and heart, the connection must be that sort of contemplation which seeks within for light on the external world. One who develops the capacity for quiet musing of this sort may discover that a special sort of language speaks to his need and provides assistance. William Q. Judge found that language in *The Bhagavad-Gita,* and it is for this reason that in his "Notes" on the central themes of the

Gita and in his "Letters" we find the same suggestive simplicity and directness. Neither in his Notes nor in his Letters does Mr. Judge exhort to particular applications of Theosophical teachings. Instead, he creates an atmosphere in which one may seek the state of mind which will bring applications into harmony with Theosophical philosophy. In the letters of Robert Crosbie, the reader of the *Friendly Philosopher* will note the natural transmission of this heritage—a blending of ideation and attitude.

On the occasion of Mr. Crosbie's passing his student-companions could think of no better memorial than the reprinting of some of his remarks in respect to "daily life." It is easy to see how the Three Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* are interwoven in this paragraph:

> How shall we apply Theosophy in daily life? First, to think what we are in reality, on arising; to endeavor to realize what this small segment of our great existence may mean in the long series of such existences; to resolve to live throughout the day from the highest of our realizations; to see in each event and circumstance a reproduction in small or in great of that which has been; and to deal with each and every one of these from that same high point. Resolve to deal with them as though each had a deep occult meaning and presented an opportunity to further the successes of the past, or undo the errors. Thus living from moment to moment, hour to hour, life will be seen as a portion of a great web of action and reaction, intermeshed at every point, and connected with the Soul which provided the energy that sustained it. If each event is so considered throughout the day, be it small or great, the power to guide and control your energies will in no long time be yours. The smaller cycles of the personal ego will be related to the Divine Ego and the force that flows from the latter will show itself in every way, will strengthen the whole nature, and will even change the conditions, physical and otherwise, which surround you.

THE MYSTERY OF DEATH

WHATEVER else may be involved in the mystery of death, it is a horizon toward which all march and beyond which all must go. So, there are at least two sides to this question of death: the side which concerns those still living in bodies and the side which concerns those who have passed beyond the horizon.

Now, what do we know about death? All we know is that that which was visible, present, and cognizable, to some degree at least, is no longer present, no longer cognizable, no longer visible. That is all we know. All the rest is guesswork, whether we call it revelation, hope, doubt, or materialism. If, then, we are to get any approach at all to the real mystery of death, we shall have to adopt an utterly different modulus from that which obtains in any religion, in any philosophy, in any science. No matter what claims are made for these various approaches, they have not added to our knowledge; they have only added to the already too-vast and unsoundable ocean of mere credulity or incredulity regarding the subject of death.

The next thing we know in regard to death is that it comes to everyone. No one escapes it; there is no protection against it. Not only does death come to all alike, but death is the most natural—one might very well say the *only* natural—thing in the unnatural existence in which we live. (Long ago, the Buddhists recognized that death is even more natural than birth, and reserved black to signify mourning at birth and white with garlands of flowers to symbolize the release of those they loved.) Surely, then, if death is a natural thing, it must be susceptible to reasonable interpretation and understanding. Yet, to the majority of religionists, scientists, and philosophers, death is eternally a mystery. It is a mystery, however, which should be pondered on—not in the attitude of a religionist, nor of a philosopher, nor of a scientist, but in the attitude of a *student*. For, let a person once get it clearly before his mental vision that Theoso-

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NOTE.—This article is based upon and largely excerpted verbatim from a talk given at a Theosophical meeting—long ago in point of time, yet eternally contemporary.

phy is the mathematics of the Soul, and he can study Theosophy as he once studied arithmetic—by study, by application.

In this attitude, then, let us consider death. If all that we know of death is that he who was visibly present in the body is now no longer visible and that we now have no means of communication with him, does this mean that death is extinction? To believe that a man is extinct because he is out of sight is to say two things; that his existence depends on our seeing him; and that his existence depends on bodily form, its continuity and coherence. Neither one of these premises will stand one moment's direct perception. On *that* basis, every single thing that passes beyond our angle of vision or that we cease to look at, is dead. Dissolve a lump of sugar in a cup of coffee, and inside of a few seconds the sugar has disappeared—to all appearances the sugar is "dead." But taste the coffee before putting in the sugar and then taste it afterwards, and its presence is evident to the sense of taste. Then evaporate the coffee, and the sugar reappears in its integrity—again evident to the sense of sight. This brings us to perceive that the only reality of anything *to us* is in our consciousness of it, and in nothing else. So that actually the real anguish we feel when a loved one is taken from us by death is caused by the fact that we associate invisibility with annihilation. Yet, in reality, his existence for us is only transformed from regions physical and corporeal to regions metaphysical and formless; for he lives on in our memory, he lives on in our love and our anguish, but he *still lives*. After a while, however, even the memory fades, and the man has "died" again—a far more durable death. He has gone first out of our sight; next, out of our mind. If these were the only two "lives" he had lived, if these were the only two contacts he had with us, if these were the only two lives *we* had lived with him, then life would not have been worth while. But there is another life—in the heart. Always he will be in our heart.

These words "senses," "mind," "heart," as all other terms we use, have different meanings in Theosophy from those we ordinarily attach to them. In the teachings of Theosophy, every being soever is capable of three distinct sorts of existence. That is, there are three distinct worlds. A man may pass from any one of them to another and return again—three distinct existences for any being! Generally considered, "a being" means something that we can see, that is—a form; something that we can communicate with, that is, one who

has a form similar to our own and whose level of intelligence, for the time being at least, is the same as our own. "Being," in Theosophy, however, means something altogether different.

In order to arrive at the Theosophical meaning of being, let us assume for a moment that there is but one Matter, in spite of all its individual forms and its countless states and conditions. Assume that Matter is eternal, universal, permanent and immutable—it only *appears* to change from gas to liquid, liquid to solid, and back again; it only *appears* to present any number of entitative abstractions called "forms." They are all made up of matter, come out of matter, exist in matter, and, when dissolved, all return to matter. All the time nothing but Matter!

Proceed, then, a step further: Can we imagine a time, spot, sphere, or focus, physical or metaphysical, where force is not present and in manifestation? No matter what forms or states or conditions of energy there may be, can we imagine energy other than infinite, unconditioned, eternal, changeless, and that the same state of relativities arises in and resolves itself again in the field of force or energy as we know it does in the field of matter?

Go, now, still further, and consider Law: Can we imagine a time, spot, sphere, or focus, physical or metaphysical, where Law does not reign? where a metaphysical apple falls *up* instead of down? or where you plant an apple and reap a thorn tree? Impossible! Easy enough to see in regard to what we call Law that it is the same as regards what we call Force or Energy, or what we call Matter: all are eternal, immutable, omnipresent, ever-active.

There is, moreover, *something* behind all of these—behind Matter, behind Force, behind Law—and that is Intelligence. Not only Intelligence, but *operative* Intelligence! We can manipulate matter, we can manipulate energy, we can manipulate law. By so doing, we learn that all forms of matter are just passing images in Matter; that all states and forms of force are but passing manifestations of Energy; that all phenomenal exhibitions of the activity and operation of law are but particularities of Law. Thus we can understand that all moving, encased intelligences are but foci of the One Intelligence.

What is Intelligence? A highly refined manifestation of Life. What is Law? The mass action of that Intelligence. What is Force? The

energic emission of that Intelligence. What is Matter? The effect of that emission. So, we can resolve all matter into force; all force into will; all will into intelligence; all intelligence into Life. Life, then, is the eternal FACT, not death. Death is but an incidence in continuing life.

It is very easy to show that under no possible or imaginable circumstances could death have any effect on those who die which is comparable to the effect on those who are left behind. For, if the man who dies is "done for," death does not affect him at all; whereas if the man who dies is *not* dead, his "death" has quite a different effect on him from its effect on those who think he is done for. The teachings of Theosophy describe these "effect states," states which are analogous to states of consciousness which we experience while living in a body, and which are, therefore, at least susceptible to rational consideration and logical understanding.

Theosophy teaches that there is but One Life; that everything that is, was, and shall be, is eternally and fundamentally nothing more and nothing less than an indivisible fractionation—a ray from and one with the One Life. Krishna, the Shepherd of India, beautifully expresses this fundamental Oneness in the second chapter of *The Bhagavad-Gita*:

> Thou grievest for those that may not be lamented, whilst thy sentiments are those of the expounders of the letter of the law. Those who are wise in spiritual things grieve neither for the dead nor for the living. I myself never was not, nor thou, nor all the princes of the earth; nor shall we ever hereafter cease to be. As the lord of this mortal frame experienceth therein infancy, youth, and old age, so in future incarnations will it meet the same. One who is confirmed in this belief is not disturbed by anything that may come to pass. . . . Seek this wisdom by doing service, by strong search, by questions, and by humility; the wise who see the truth will communicate it unto thee, and knowing which thou shalt never again fall into error. By this knowledge thou shalt see all things and creatures whatsoever in thyself and then in me.

This is spiritual knowledge, and comprehends both the living and the dead.

YOUTH FORUM

CONFRONTED all our lives with physical appearances, we are likely to have some difficulty comprehending the idea that reality lies not in these external forms, but in an invisible and intangible substratum of spirit. How are we to understand this basic doctrine, and overcome the illusion of the senses?

The question is a crucial one, for until each individual is able to answer it satisfactorily, all of life will remain enigmatic. This is perhaps because physical objects, when divorced from spirit, carry little meaning. It is not too much to say that when we cannot see beyond appearances, we are alone and lost, whereas when we do see underlying meanings, we are at home, no matter where we are. For example, we may be riding a subway, and be unable to sense anything but the rumble of steel on steel, of fact on senseless fact; but then, at another time, we may see a lone tree writhing in an autumn wind, and suddenly start with a human insight. It would not seem that the difference is so much in the particular forms (though certainly some forms are more symbolically suggestive), but in ourselves.

Clearly, to say that the physical world is the world of appearances is not to say that it doesn't exist, but simply that it does not exist "of itself"—that it is the result of non-physical causes, and depends on these causes for meaningfulness. It seems, too, that we recognize the existence and importance of these unseen causes, even unconsciously, all the time. We instinctively sense the "auras" of the people around us, and are drawn to some and repelled by others despite physical appearances. Then too, why should it be that some feel a kind of depression at Christmas time, if not that they sense that the pure clean reality of the "Christmas spirit" is being exploited and violated by heartless commercialism? Or again, do not the people we see around us seem quite unreal until we have come to know their aspirations, their intangible warmth?

To take an example, we find that the problem of seeing through appearances may exist even in a Theosophical lodge. The first Object is "To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. . . ." In reading these words, one might expect that such a nucleus, if it is to grow to universal proportions, must be a hard bright flame, a brilliant seed of love. Yet as one looks about at his fellow-students, seemingly ordinary people with ordinary problems and preoccupations, one begins to wonder. Everyone is friendly, to be sure, but there does not *appear* to be anything extraordinary about their friendliness. Thinking in this way, however, it is possible to overlook several important points—for example the fact that an Object is an ideal striven for, not necessarily a present reality. It is *possible* for such a nucleus to be formed by students of Theosophy for the simple reason that in Theosophy alone is to be found the rationale for brotherhood, the doctrine of the sevenfold constitution of man—in short, the means by which one may eventually see beyond all appearances and recognize the core of soul in every individual. Theosophy helps one to recognize that core and to comprehend its nature. Further, there may be a deeper relationship between students than mere surface friendliness, holding, as they do, to common devotion to the Teachings. This devotion is no small thing, and to entertain these great ideas, to discuss them and ponder them, is automatically to disseminate them. As these ideas circulate, a greater and greater number of receptive minds may "catch fire," and become in their turn better able to distinguish the appearance from the indwelling spirit. It is in this way that a nucleus grows.

This is not to say that students have no need to improve in their ability to regard their fellow-students (and their fellow-men in general) from the point of view of soul. There is always the tendency toward separative thinking, a certain inertia of the heart which must be overcome if we are ever to meet our fellows "soul to soul." Then, too, there is the fear which others feel—as much a fear of being seen as of not being seen, as much of becoming "vulnerable" as of remaining anonymous. Yet "for once, then, something," as we are told in a remarkable poem by Robert Frost—if once we glimpse another human spirit, if we sense that "something," we can never again feel totally alienated from life. By constantly striving to view men as souls, we may at last achieve the conscious realization that there is, after all, no "ordinary" human being, any more than there is an ordinary sunset, an ordinary star, an ordinary aspiration.

WORDS AND MEANINGS

PHILOLOGY, the science of language, involves much more than a consideration of grammar and vocabulary. Of interest as well are such features as the psychological interpretation of structure and the changing outlook of a people as expressed in the development of new words and the discard of others once in current use.

Students of Theosophical philosophy are aware that its effects are far-reaching and touch upon many aspects of life. This influence is to be observed, among other areas, in the language itself. The advent of Theosophy, together with its body of literature, has resulted in a growing familiarity of English-speaking peoples with certain words which, while Sanskrit in origin, are now a part of our accepted terminology. In addition to the introduction of new words, some already in use have been affected.

An example of changing concepts and shifting meanings is found in the words "metempsychosis" and "reincarnation." The standard reference work for the history of English words is the Oxford *New English Dictionary*. In this monumental work, totaling thirteen volumes, the earliest recorded use of any English word is given, together with examples throughout the years, so that one is able to trace the history of a word and the way in which its meaning has altered. We find that "metempsychosis" was employed as early as 1590 when Marlowe in his *Faust* wrote: "Ah Pythagoras *metem su cosis* [sic] were that true, This soule should flie from me, and I be changde Vnto some brutish beast." Further examples are given from poets and dramatists of later date, including the amusing couplet from A. Brome (1661) in *To Mr. J.B.*: "How great a joy 'twould be, how great a bliss,/If we could have a metempsychosis!" And Sir Thomas Browne is quoted as writing in 1682: "Dream not of any kind of *Metempsychosis* or transanimation, but into thine own body, and that after a long time, and then also unto wail or bliss, according to thy first and fundamental Life."

The illustrations continue up to current times, the general meaning remaining the same. In the nineteenth century, however, we find

a new word coming into use—reincarnation. While based upon the much older term "incarnation," which appears in 1532, the word "reincarnation" was first used in 1858 when Sears wrote in his *Ahanasia; or foregleams of immortality*: "The Essenes . . . rejected totally . . . the dogma concerning re-incarnation." A further quotation is from Pember's *Earth's Earliest Ages*: "Sin must be gradually worn away . . . in a series of reincarnations upon earth."

What is of particular interest to the student of Theosophy is that modern usage has tended to turn from the older word "metempsychosis," with its long history of association with authors of repute, to the newer "reincarnation," which is indisputably associated with the Theosophical Movement of our time. To the uninformed these two words are interchangeable, but to the student there is considerable difference; and it is evidence of the spread of true ideas that indexes to works on Eastern philosophy now frequently refer *from* "metempsychosis" *to* "reincarnation," and that an understanding has been reached as to the distinction between the concept of the human Ego, with its repeated incarnations on earth, and the changes of *form* which may be observed at other levels of consciousness.

Motion is a fundamental aspect of life in manifestation. This motion is responsible for the innumerable changes which occur in places, circumstances, and things. But the change is an outward expression only, while the causal or motivating force is primary. This duality, characteristic of all manifestation, can be seen in alterations of language and traced through changes of word meanings.

AN OUTGROWN DEFINITION

The word *God* is now archaic, and it ought to be dropped by those who do not need it for moral support. This word has the disadvantage of having meant already far too many things in too many ages of history and to too many kinds of people, along with the disadvantage that the one thing these various meanings have all had more or less in common is an anthropomorphic picture.

—EDMUND WILSON

THE RESIDUE FACTOR

Alas! there are times when I wish that I could fear.
—*Zanoni*

THAT the above remark was not literally meant, one takes for granted. No man freed of the incubus of fear could willingly allow its return. Fear is a property or quality of life which few persons would openly claim as their own. Yet, exceptional is the man, and fortunate, today, the one who has no shadow of "anxiety neurosis" incubating in a complex of major and minor trepidations. Unless one is entirely sattvic, which is hardly possible, or entirely tamasic, which also is not possible, he shares the rajasic quality of the universal mother Nature, accompanied by "fear"—part of "the mighty magic of Prakriti."

What is fear, analyzed at bottom, but a running from, an attempt at side-stepping, duty? And where is to be met that knowledge leading from "resignation" to freedom, if not in the confronting of duty? Irresoluteness, weakness of determination, inability, from whatever cause, to command the mind in steady direction—do not these failings involve the quality of fear?

At the outset of the Mahabharata, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Duryodhana, spokesman on the side of all merely psychic powers, said: "We shall lose the battle. Our forces are not sufficient. Yet of course we will fight." What indeed is the all-compelling motor in this eternal struggle, the battle to death between the self of Matter and Spirit-Mind? Arjuna desired to do right, but he *feared* to do wrong. Uncertainty was his plea. "As I am of a disposition which is affected by compassion and the fear of doing wrong, I ask thee which is it better to do? Tell me that distinctly! I am thy disciple."

But the power of fearlessness is not in a kind of control maintained, it is the absence of fear. The GI isolated from his platoon, at the mercy of the jungle, or the platoon itself functioning as a unit in order to carry on and perform "the impossible," must needs conquer what "alien"? When karma strikes in tragedy, the familiar and dependable vanish suddenly and are no more, a family fortune wiped out, a loved one taken—the test life thrusts upon us takes what form?

Fear, a factor in lust, greed, hypocrisy, initiates brutality in the struggle for life, fear legislates the survival of the fittest—"a pretended law indeed"; the most terrible violation of the first law of human Solidarity, "sole cause of human starvation,"—a heritage not yet outgrown.

The dejection permitted in one by fear of consequences, fears for the future—is this not *maya?* When one contemplates the possibility of a return *today* of the ageless apocalyptic "Four Horsemen" . . . how class *these* meditations! At what point, in its insidious reaches, is fear justified?

The anchorite laboring for personal salvation, like the miser counting his coin, desiring only that those labors should not be disturbed by contact of fellowman; whence the mainspring of this "devotion"? Are we not informed that it is the very "scent" of fear which propels shark or tiger furiously to slay a frightened man, but that even those beasts will ever respect the life of one who, possessing harmlessness, has no fear?

In Lytton's book we find Zanoni instructing the procrastinating Glyndon:

> Fear thou hast, and the worst fear—fear of the world's opinion, fear of the Nicots and Mervales, fear of thine own impulses when most generous, fear of thine own powers when thy genius is most bold; fear that virtue is not eternal, fear that God does not live in his heaven to keep watch on earth; fear, the fear of little men; and that fear is never known to the great.

The taboos and sacred rites before an animist shrine, the prostrated suppliance before an idol—whether of man black, brown white, or red—prayerful worship directed to one's favorite deity: are these not tribute of man degraded, paid but to whatever elemental "god of fear and wrath unquenchable"! The dread of despair is an element felt in every degree of the manifested cosmos. "Space

and heaven," cried Arjuna from his Vision, "and earth and every point around the three regions of the universe are filled with thee [Krishna] alone. The triple world is full of fear, O thou of mighty Spirit, seeing this thy marvelous form of terror. Of the assemblage of the gods some I see fly to thee for refuge, while some in fear with joined hands sing forth thy praise."

Was it not Lafcadio Hearn who, envisioning in ever lengthening series his past existences, saw all as linked together in nameless unending pain? What has taken place in those past lives? "No man," says Wm. Q. Judge ("Friends or Enemies in the Future")—"no man becomes your friend in a present life by reason of present acts alone. He was your friend, or you his, before in a previous life. Your present acts but revive an old friendship, renew the ancient obligation. Was he your enemy before, he will be now even though you do him service now, for these tendencies last more than three lives."

What is the nature of fear? It is akin to Nature's own freezing process; the cause is ignorance. Fear is a shriveling contraction of the inner design-body and of its life-renewing currents. It paralyzes Will, it stays action of all degrees. It is to be mastered not only by great deeds of courage and resourcefulness, but primarily by *knowledge*. Knowledge produces abatement of fear, the death of despotism.

"Half, if not two-thirds of our ailings and diseases are the fruit of our imagination and fears. Destroy the latter and give another bent to the former, and nature will do the rest," said H. P. Blavatsky. The world could get along with what disease there is, if it only turned attention to high ethics and altruistic endeavor.

Uncertainty, unchecked, evokes the phantom, "and doubt his dark companion." People hate only the things they fear. The grand deterrent is the Golden Mean, the "Middle Path," duty followed in faith. "Our attitude should be that if there is work to do and we can do it, we must, regardless of results; we know that the Law takes care of them, without thought or effort on our part, and with exactitude undisturbed by our sentiments. We see that and admit it, yet fear to trust, even when we know that there is nothing else that can be done by us."

on the lookout

Some Intellectuals "Theosophize"

Arthur Guirdham's *Christ and Freud* (Collier Books, 1962) is a useful companion volume to such books as Erich Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* Viktor Frankl's *From Death Camp to Existentialism,* and Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces.* Each of these perceptive writers, in his own way, is able to look at the vast subject of "religion" with that bifocal vision which is encouraged in Theosophists by the study of H. P. Blavatsky.

All organized religion tends to weave partisan configurations from threads of essential psychological and mystical truth, but the resultant credo and consequent dogmas characteristically serve to retard, rather than to advance, the development of self-reliant character. Authoritarianism in religion leads to a weakening of the individual will, and this is particularly noticeable in Christianity, with its emphasis upon the "father figure" God, who makes man seem correspondingly weak and sinful. Metaphysical beliefs, in other words, have serious consequences. Lawrence Durrell, in a preface to Guirdham's *Christ and Freud,* suggests that this is so:

> Theologies . . . tend to lose impetus and harden into dogma, to atrophy. Dr. Guirdham belongs to that small band of creative individuals who feel bound to sort through these huge slag heaps in search of whatever gold may lie underneath the dross. And his long clinical practice has enabled him to test his views in the field, so to speak—the field of the human personality, which is so deeply influenced by the very views it holds (or is taught) about its own nature. Some of these views come from science, some from religion. How valid are they and how acceptable today? To what extent do they prejudice or nourish the health of the individual human psyche? Could our illnesses be regarded as metaphysical extensions of our beliefs?

Freud's Basic Criticism

Dr. Guirdham, who is a practicing psychiatrist, helps to clarify the need for Sigmund Freud's incisive analysis of the detrimental

effects of a sectarian religion based upon the notion of a *personal* "God":

> It is a feat of psychological gymnastics beyond the capacity of most to feel guilt in relation to a universal spirit pervading all things. It is easy to produce guilt reactions in relation to a God conceived of as an ever watchful father endowed with the capacity to bless or to punish. In Buddhism and Hinduism God is not endowed with the personal qualities bestowed on Him in Jewish and Christian belief. He is conceived of as a spirit infiltrating all things and to which all things will return. It cannot be disputed that the neuroses, which are among the major curses of our Western civilization, are of infinitely smaller incidence against a Buddhist or Hindu background.
>
> Christian ecclesiastics have been loath to admit that the Universal Spirit in Buddhism and Hinduism is to be regarded as God, and have even gone so far as to describe these religions as atheistic. It is quite common to find them referred to by Christian priests and ministers as not religions but philosophical systems. The explanation of this attitude is that such Christian ecclesiastics cannot conceive of God as anything other than a person.

Religion Becomes Neurotic

Dr. Guirdham continues:

> Religion as conceived of by Freud is a neurosis and the latter condition is invariably associated with a sense of insecurity. . . . In the course of history it is all too obvious how the exponents of organized religion have used their particular creeds as a buttress for their own insecurity. The ferocity with which they have defended themselves against the adverse criticism of even minor deviationists is illuminating. The naturally irreligious can be distinguished by the fury with which they support the articles of religion. Stable individuals do not display towards those who differ from them signs of intolerance, let alone those of vindictiveness.
>
> Men have wondered for centuries how Christians can have tortured and killed each other, for the love of God, and what intricate variety of spiritual blindness could have enabled the Inquisition to burn devout Christians in the name of Christ. Modern psychiatry permits us to see that the Inquisitors were themselves, below the conscious level, afflicted with doubt. Men so doubting, and reacting with guilt towards their uncertainty, could atone and reassure themselves either by the punishment of themselves or others. In such circumstances the choice of self-castigation or the chastisement of others depends on the temperament of the individual. The flagellants were recruited from the former and the Inquisitors from the latter class.

Greater Maturity of the "Eastern" View

It is impossible to broaden one's understanding, or to uproot de-

fensive delusions, so long as one is encouraged to view his own traditions as exclusively "right" or "good." Dr. Guirdham continues with his suggestive comparison of "the wisdom of the East" with the unwisdom of the theological West:

> Whenever a sect proclaims that its own creed is the sole prescription for salvation it should be assumed that its basis is neurotic and rests on fear and a sense of insecurity. The more the individual is obsessed by his own insecurity the more he is likely to choose a rigid and infallible prescription for salvation. This exclusiveness is the bane of Christianity when considered in relation to the Hindu and Buddhist faiths. Christianity insists on the doctrine of salvation through Christ alone. Few Roman Catholics would qualify this view and quite recently the head of the Anglican community expressed himself positively to this effect. It is the boast of Christianity that no other religion is so supported by the evidence of history. This insistence is useful as a proof of its validity but from the spiritual aspect is quite undesirable. A sense of the presence of God as everywhere and within the individual can be achieved by many different approaches, including some not exclusively religious. When one considers the extraordinary number of Christian sects, many claiming exclusive ownership of the keys of the Kingdom, one sees to what degree Christianity is saturated with the belief in its own specific remedies. It also cannot be doubted that the incidence of neurosis in the Christian world is higher than in the less exclusive Buddhist and Hindu communities.

H. P. Blavatsky on Authoritarianism

Throughout the writings of H. P. Blavatsky may be found statements supporting the points made by Dr. Guirdham. The pamphlet *What is Theosophy? Its Nonsectarian Spirit,* is especially rich material of this sort. And in the article, *"Lucifer* to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Greetings!" we find:

> A religion is true in proportion as it supplies the spiritual, moral and intellectual needs of the time, and helps the development of mankind in these respects. It is false in proportion as it hinders that development, and offends the spiritual, moral and intellectual portion of man's nature. And the transcendentally spiritual ideas of the ruling powers of the Universe entertained by an Oriental sage would be as false a religion for the African savage as the groveling fetishism of the latter would be for the sage, although both views must necessarily be true in degree, for both represent the highest ideas attainable by the respective individuals of the same cosmic-spiritual facts, which can never be known in their reality by man while he remains but man. . . . It is not "medicine men," but spiritual guides that the world looks for today. . . .

Thus if a given "religion" is to be health-giving, its formulations must meet the psycho-logico-spiritual needs of a universal culture.

The Supreme Court Against Public Prayer—Aftermath

Since June 25, when the Supreme Court ruled that an official prayer in the New York public schools violated the Constitution of the United States, a constructive ferment of debate has been carried on in the nation's press. From a Theosophical point of view the value of such discussion lies in the inevitable distinctions which must be established between religion, philosophy, and any form of political or social control.

In the early days of the controversy, headlines such as "Churchmen Voice Shock" introduced the protests of ministers or fervent believers. Many newspaper readers, however, contributed letters of "counter protest" to editorial pages, pointing out that the Court's decision should be a cause for rejoicing, even on the part of the clergy —and not call forth diatribes. One such letter, appearing in the New York *Times* for July 5, provides a good example of informed thinking. Mr. Sherman Wakefield writes:

> The letters devoted to the court ruling on prayer in your issue of June 29 had some strange comments to make. The Rev. Benjamin Minifie of Grace Church states that the "Supreme Court has now in truth established a religion in this country, the religion of secularism." What the court has really done is to disestablish religion in the public schools, and it has only upheld the secular nature of our Government as established by the Founding Fathers. Mention of God is not prohibited in the church and home or anywhere else outside of the public schools.
>
> If Dr. Minifie is not historian enough to know that the United States was founded as a secular country, he should be Bible student enough to know that Jesus urged his followers not to pray in public, "but thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." (Matt. vi, 5-6.)

What is the Basic Heritage?

Mr. Wakefield continues:

> R. M. Dubois, in his letter, states "this nation turned its back on its heritage by decision of the highest court of the land," and adds this extraordinary statement: "as of this date our proud country enters an era of state atheism." As already stated, the Supreme Court upheld a basic American heritage by its decision—the separation of church and state.
>
> Veronica S. Cassidy, in her ignorance of American history, also says the decision "denies our American heritage." These and similar state-

ments only go to show how inadequately American history is taught in our schools.

Philip B. Armstrong, in his letter, sums up the real situation as follows: "The intrusion of a religious observance into a purely secular occasion with required attendance and active participation is obviously in conflict with the First Amendment of the Constitution. The decision of the Supreme Court was inevitable."

"Religion and Citizenship"

The Theosophical student will also appreciate the remarks of John Ciardi in the *Saturday Review* (Sept. 22):

> The Supreme Court has taken the position that it is unconstitutional for an agency of the government to coerce religious expression, and it has held that for a public school to require the reading of a prayer as part of its standard procedure constitutes such coercion even when dissenting pupils are permitted to abstain from the reading. . . .
>
> The issue, I repeat, is not religion but my right to make up my own mind—and to let my children make up theirs—on such matters as God, prayer, and the intent, if any, of the Universe. It is the right to reach a personal decision with no least trace of coercion from any branch of government. And it is the right to unimpaired citizenship no matter what final view one comes up with.

The Rights of Secularism

Mr. Ciardi continues:

> It would not be honest to pretend that I have not reached what I take to be a reasonably firm and final view. I do not pray, and I am not aware that a belief in supernatural forces motivates anything I do. I am not moved to be militant about my view. But my tolerance ends at the point at which any man dares to rise to me in my error—if error is what it is—to say that I am required as a citizen to believe, and publicly to avow, that the United States exists, as the Eisenhower pledge of allegiance would have it, "under God."
>
> I will insist with the minority of the clergy that the Court's decision is fundamental to the idea of the American democracy. It takes religion away from no man and forces it upon none. It declares again that though a man is free to worship as he sees fit, or not to worship at all, his citizenship is secular and in no way dependent upon his affirmation of religious belief, or upon his refusal to make such an affirmation. For what point can there be in defending the right of the individual conscience, if the individual is not free, in conscience, to come to the less popular conclusion as well as to the more popular one?

Unitarians Against "Government Prayer"

It will come as no surprise to those who are aware of the broaden-

ing perspectives of Universalists and Unitarians to note that leading officials of both affiliations approved the Supreme Court decision. The *Register-Leader* for October, for example, includes the following quotations in a summary of the "prayer debate." After stating that "Unitarian Universalist reaction was quick in coming" and that the 6-to-1 ruling of the Court was "applauded," the editorial quotes Dr. Dana McLean Greeley, president of the Unitarian Universalist Association, who praised the decision:

> In citing the unconstitutionality of prayer reading in the public schools, the Supreme Court has acted clearly in support of the principle of the separation of church and state as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution. The court has recognized that a prayer sanctioned by the majority must inevitably discriminate against the viewpoints of religious minorities.
>
> Unitarians and Universalists have traditionally maintained that the interests of religion and of the community are best served when church and state are clearly independent of one another, both in organization and function. The Supreme Court decision will do much to clarify this distinction.

Thirteen Unitarian Universalist ministers in the New York City area issued a statement supporting the court's ruling, and added:

> We do not believe the repetition or group saying of prayers will make children more religious than they would otherwise be, nor do we believe such practice to be an educationally sound procedure.

(See "Misunderstood Biblical Traditions" in THEOSOPHY, July and August, for a number of correlates with this Unitarian-Universalist position on "prayer.")

Physical Karma and Drugs

In the New York *Herald Tribune* for April 25, Earl Ubell reports the powerful effects upon infants of drugs taken by their mothers during pregnancy. Bellevue Hospital's Dr. Saul Krugman, head of pediatrics, points out that babies "only minutes old" are heroin addicts—if their mothers take the drug. Statistically, of course, few mothers are narcotics addicts, but the frightening sensitivity of the infants studied by Dr. Krugman suggests that the use of any violent drugs—including most of the tranquilizers and sleeping pills—may throw the psycho-physiological organism of the newly born child into some form of disorder. According to Dr. Krugman:

> More than 100 such infants have turned up in the last two years, and they show all the signs of drug withdrawal: irritability, jitters,

loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, sometimes convulsions and death.

Unlike the adult addict who gets over his symptoms of withdrawal in a matter of days, in most cases, the infant has to be treated for weeks and months. The baby continues to show physical signs of the action of the drug.

Are Drugs the Offenders Here?

Newsweek for August 20 also has a column on babies. The question is "why should a child, put to bed in good health in the evening, be found lying dead the next morning?" It seems that some 25,000 such deaths occur annually in the United States, and, "while the mortality from recognized diseases in infants has declined markedly, crib deaths have remained at a high level." The article concludes:

Despite the size of the problem, little research has been done in the field, and all theories to explain sudden deaths in infancy have, up to now, been disproved. During the 1920s and 1930s, for example, the deaths were widely blamed on sudden enlargement of a small gland in the neck—the thymus—which squeezed the baby's windpipe and led to asphyxiation. After this idea was laid to rest, doctors attributed crib deaths largely to smothering; today most pediatricians believe the normal healthy baby, small as he is, can struggle out of a tangle of bedclothes. Recently, prompted by the thalidomide tragedy, a Philadelphia gynecologist suggested that drugs taken during pregnancy might be a cause of sudden infant deaths.

"The Law Eternal"

In his "Strictly Personal" column in the Chicago *Daily News* for Dec. 29, 1961, Sydney Harris says something that all Theosophists will agree with:

In a world of conflicting "isms," our real enemy is not communism or fascism or any other political "ism." The real enemy of the human race is irrationalism—that is the "ism" we have most to fear. . . . These political doctrines . . . are all manifestations of the irrational in man, his dark, destructive impulses, his anger and his frustration. The dark impulses dwelling within cannot be defeated by force; indeed, force only fans the flames of resentment and rebellion. This is a lesson we should have learned from Lao-tse and Confucius and Jesus; but we have not learned it, and we are paying a heavy price for ignoring this lesson.

Or, as *The Dhammapada* puts it: "In this world never is enmity appeased by hatred; enmity is ever appeased by Love. This is the Law Eternal."